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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of Colombia

Addendum

Information provided by Colombia in follow-up to the concluding observations*

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Note: The present document is being circulated in English, French and Spanish only.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CAIVAS	Comprehensive care centre for victims of sexual abuse
CAV	Victim care centre
CAVIF	Domestic violence victim support centres
CERREM	Committee on Risk Assessment and Recommendation of Measures
CNMH	National Centre for Historic Memory
CPDDHH	Presidential Council for Human Rights
CPEM	Presidential Council for Women's Equity
CONPES	National Council for Economic and Social Policy
CDS	South American Defense Council
DAFP	Administrative Department of the Public Service
DINAC	National Analysis and Context Department, Attorney-General's Office
DNP	National Planning Department
DTS	Local health directorates
EGED	Gender and Differentiated Approaches Team
EPS	Health-promoting company
FARC-EP	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejército del Pueblo
FECOLSOG	Colombian Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecology
FGN	Attorney General's Office
GBV	Gender-based violence
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ICBF	Colombian Family Welfare Institute
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPS	Health care providers
KAP	Knowledge, attitude and practice
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MVA	Manual vacuum aspiration

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NNAJ	Boys, girls, adolescents and youth
OACP	Office of the High Commissioner for Peace
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PARD	Administrative process of restoring rights
PESCC	Sexuality and Citizenship Education Programme
PSDP	Ten-Year Public Health Plan
PWD	Persons with disabilities
RUV	Central Register of Victims
SAU	Assistance centres
SRR	Sexual and reproductive rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UARIV	Victim Assistance and Comprehensive Reparation Unit
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNP	National Protection Unit
URI	Immediate response units
URT	Land Restitution Unit
VIP	Voluntary interruption of pregnancy
SAAJ	Youth-friendly services
SENA	National Learning Service
SGSSS	General Social Security System for Health
SRH	Sexual and reproductive health

Background

1. Colombia is a rising country that is faced with significant challenges and difficulties but has demonstrated its commitment to improving the exercise of and respect for the human rights of the entire population, without distinction. Its efforts should be viewed from the perspective of a nation that has been dealing with a conflict and the resulting complexities for five decades.

2. Guaranteeing the rights of women is now a common objective of all State institutions, which have worked in a coordinated manner to align their actions and mainstream a gender perspective across their various programmes.

3. The Government has therefore made an effort to strengthen the institutional framework by consolidating coordination mechanisms, enhancing technical and investigative knowledge, producing information and analyses of disaggregated data and developing strategies to ensure that State budgets meet the needs of women and include a gender perspective.

4. In recent years, Colombia has seen changes at the policymaking and institutional levels designed to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights and to improve the efficiency and coherence of the State's organization and functioning. The institutional and legislative reform can be viewed as having two broad goals, namely to safeguard firstly the human rights of the entire population and secondly those of victims in particular, in order to achieve full reparation and reconciliation and thereby pave the way for progress towards ending the armed conflict.

5. The improvements in the human rights situation in Colombia demonstrate the Government's commitment to complying with the highest standard of safeguarding human rights. Although challenges still remain, the Government's will to overcome them is evident, for example with regard to access to justice for women and girls who have been victims of violence, in particular the obligations to investigate, prosecute and take measures to guarantee the privacy, confidentiality and safety of victims, and to address women's needs and fears, while ensuring that they are not subject to stigmatization or revictimization.

6. We will continue in our commitment to afford redress for the harm suffered by women, in particular by providing for compensation and restitution but also through guarantees of non-repetition and preventive measures. We will also continue to act as agents of change as regards the position of women, primarily by fostering and creating a culture free of all forms of discrimination and violence against women, in accordance with our obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. We also remain committed to upholding our obligation to punish and put an end to the impunity that can perpetuate gender-based discrimination in cultural and family life.

7. The Committee should be aware that this document was drawn up under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the support of the Presidential Council for Women's Equity (CPEM) and the participation of the governmental bodies responsible for the implementation of the recommendations, namely the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Defence, the national police force, the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OACP), the Attorney-General's Office (FGN) and the Victim Assistance and Comprehensive Reparation Unit (UARIV). In order to comprehensively address the recommendations in paragraphs 24 and 30 of the

concluding observations on the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of Colombia, the information in this addendum covers the period from 2013 to 2015.

Recommendation relating to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)

8. The national institutions are implementing Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), in accordance with that resolution and the resolutions that complement it, through four action areas: preventing violence, increasing participation and representation, promoting and protecting rights, and meeting needs and priorities in terms of relief and recovery.

9. The actions undertaken are broadly set out in the National Public Policy on Gender Equity and the Comprehensive Plan for Guaranteeing Women a Life Free of Violence (National Council for Economic and Social Policy (CONPES) document No. 161 of 2013).[1]

10. The policy comprises three components: participatory, institutional and sector-strategic. With regard to the component on strengthening institutions, a strategy to protect the rights of women at risk and women victims of forced displacement or other forms of violence in the context of armed conflict has been adopted and is being implemented through action in the following areas, inter alia:

- Strengthening of actions to guarantee access to justice, in accordance with CONPES document No. 3784 and the Comprehensive Plan for Guaranteeing Women a Life Free of Violence.
- Integration and implementation of prevention, protection, care and reparation measures for women affected by armed conflict and forced displacement, in particular women of Roma, indigenous, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero origin.
- Strengthening of the gender mainstreaming process within the National System for Comprehensive Care and Reparation for Victims.
- Inclusion of additional variables in institutional information systems in order to enhance the identification and analysis of the varying ways women from different backgrounds are affected by armed conflict.

11. The Comprehensive Plan for Guaranteeing Women a Life Free of Violence includes the following actions:

- Gender mainstreaming in the design and implementation of public policies and institutional projects addressing violence against women.
- Design and implementation of information, communication and education strategies to help put an end to social acceptance of gender-based violence.
- Strengthening of institutional capacities in the sectors involved in preventing and addressing violence, including by ensuring staff are properly trained.

[1] The CONPES document sets out the actions to be taken to enhance institutional spaces, mechanisms, systems and tools through gender mainstreaming and the recognition of the violence that has affected women in situations of armed conflict, with a view to ensuring that women are not discriminated against by society or the institutions.

- Strengthening of the institutions responsible for providing health care and access to justice for female victims of violence.
- Strengthening of national coordination mechanisms for preventing and addressing violence against women.
- Monitoring and updating of the relevant legislation.
- Strengthening of information and knowledge-management systems relating to violence against women.

12. Policy is monitored using the National Planning Department (DNP) system for monitoring CONPES documents, which provides regular updates on the progress of the documents and the recommendations contained therein in accordance with a matrix provided by CPEM as the lead body for policies on those issues.

13. Furthermore, CONPES document No. 3784 of 2013, "*Guidelines for public policy on risk prevention, protection and guaranteeing the human rights of women victims of armed conflict*", was adopted specifically to respond to the problems faced by women in the context of armed conflict. It recognizes that in such circumstances women, because they are women, experience different and more serious effects than men.

14. The document is in line with the Victims Act, in particular its provisions on a gender perspective and a differentiated approach, along with Act No. 1257/2008. It covers the main points set out by the Constitutional Court in its decision T-025 and subsequent orders 092/2008 and 098/2013 and identifies the primary obstacles to comprehensive care and reparation for women victims.

15. The CONPES document sets out a number of strategic actions for the period 2013-2015, focusing on:

- Preventing risk and violations of the rights of women victims.
- Ensuring the participation of women victims as citizens in different sociocultural environments, taking into account the fact that the serious consequences of armed conflict on women are part of a broader, pre-existing context of exclusion, stigmatization and discrimination.
- Strengthening institutional action by adapting and aligning activities in order to provide an adequate and appropriate response to the situation of women victims in terms of care, assistance and reparation, which is a prerequisite for the previously mentioned actions.

16. The following are included among the main achievements in the implementation of the CONPES document:

- A gender perspective has been mainstreamed across institutional agendas and planning processes. This complements the progress that has been made on identifying differentiated risks for women victims and designing programmes that respond to the specific needs described in the decisions of the Constitutional Court.
- The implementation of specific programmes and adequate responses has been promoted. Those initiatives prioritize the provision of care, assistance and reparation for women, in recognition of the fact that the armed conflict has had a more severe impact on them than on men.

- A process of institutional change is underway. Barriers preventing women victims from exercising the rights to own land and homes and generate income and the right to protection have begun to be broken down through an analysis of legislation and legal doctrine in order to identify the implications of crimes such as forced displacement and sexual violence, cultural practices that are discriminatory and lead to exclusion, and the additional risks that women victims have faced in high-risk areas.

- An evaluation and monitoring mechanism for CONPES document No. 3784 has also been launched.[2] Its purpose is to provide updates on progress and describe how those actions have contributed to solving or mitigating the problems associated with armed conflict, as identified by women.

17. Commitments on ensuring women's rights have been included in the National Development Plan 2014-2018 and its foundational document. The gender equality policy and the policy on risk prevention, protection and guaranteeing the human rights of women victims of armed conflict will be reviewed. Commitments have also been made to facilitate the participatory development of a national public policy on rural women, create a department for rural women within the Ministry of Agriculture and develop a national intersectoral and inter-institutional coordination mechanism to comprehensively address gender-based violence.

Participation of women in the peace process

- Women have been a key part of the peace process. Since its exploratory phase between February and August 2012, the Government delegation has sought the effective representation of women at the round table, and Helena Ambrosi and Lucía Jaramillo were therefore present as witnesses to this first phase. Subsequently, and since the beginning of the discussion and development stage of its agenda, the above-mentioned officials were designated as alternate negotiators.

- In 2013, María Paulina Riveros, Director of Human Rights at the Ministry of the Interior, and Nigeria Rentería, then Presidential Adviser on Gender Equality, were appointed as plenipotentiary negotiators. In response to the resignation of Nigeria Rentería, María Ángela Holguín, the current Minister for Foreign Affairs, was appointed as plenipotentiary negotiator.

- In addition to the direct presence of women in the round table discussions, the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace[3] currently employs 34 women and 15 men in the eight action areas of its thematic division, which support negotiations and education on the peace process.

Visits from victims:

- On the basis of the General Agreement, under item 5 of the Agenda, the parties stated that compensating the victims is at the heart of the national Government's agreement with FARC-EP. Subsequently, in 2014 the round table adopted the Statement of Principles for Discussing Item 5 on the Agenda:

[2] This includes the National Planning Department action plan and periodic reports. A dashboard that will be managed by the Presidential Council for Women's Equity is under development.

[3] The Office of the High Commissioner for Peace is responsible for supporting the design and development of the peace policy and for leading dialogues and signing peace agreements.

Victims, and asked the United Nations and the Think Tank for the Monitoring of Peace Talks at the National University of Colombia to organize three regional forums, as well as one at the national level. Both round table delegations have been entrusted with reporting on the findings of the forums, which were attended by nearly 3,000 people.

- In a complementary manner, through two joint communiqués,[4] the round table asked the United Nations and the Think Tank, in consultation with different associations for victims of the conflict, and with the support of the Conference of Bishops, to organize and carry out selection processes for five delegations, each composed of twelve victims, to participate directly in the round table discussions.

- The mechanism that concluded in December 2014 consisted of direct meetings between the peace negotiation teams and 60 victims of the armed conflict, grouped into five delegations. The 60 victims included 36 women and 24 men.

Gender perspective in the points agreed on the agenda of the round table discussions

- The Agreements on the various agenda items include a gender perspective in order to promote participation through recognition of differentiated measures addressing the specific impact of gender and the important role of women in building a democratic and inclusive society.

Subcommission on gender

- The joint communiqué of June 2014 announced the establishment of a subcommission on gender, composed of members of both delegations, for the purpose of reviewing the agreements reached and an eventual final agreement to ensure that they have an appropriate gender perspective, particularly regarding women and the LGBTI community. In order to achieve this, the subcommission has received visits from national and international experts on gender, as well as women's organizations and the LGBTI community, with the aim of hearing their views on the gender perspective in the agreements.

Clarification Commission on Truth, Coexistence and Non-repetition

- This mechanism, through which the Government and FARC agreed to establish the truth, is part of a comprehensive system of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition which will be launched after the signing of the final agreement. The gender approach is present in all of its components; one of its objectives is to promote gender equality in the territory.

Mechanisms for citizen participation in the round table discussions

- Through the participation mechanisms established in the General Agreement, an average of 54,600 contributions have been received from civil society, which have informed discussions of the various items on the agenda for the round table. (See Annex 1.)

[4] Communiqués of 17 July and 6 August 2014.

Women's participation in decision-making

- The 1991 Constitution recognized the equality of men and women (arts. 13 and 43), as well as the obligation to ensure the adequate and effective participation of women at the decision-making levels of the public administration (art. 40) and gender equality as a guiding principle of political parties (art. 107).
- These constitutional provisions and the joint work of women and institutions paved the way for the adoption of two affirmative action laws key to increasing the political representation of women, Act No. 581/2000 and Act No. 1475/2011.
- In order to create mechanisms to promote the advancement of women in the areas of development and political representation, Acts No. 1434 and 1450 were adopted in 2011, as well as CONPES Document No. 140 of 2011 on Colombia's targets and strategies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
- Women's increased participation in political life and public administration and more opportunities for women at the local and national levels should be highlighted. (See Annex 2.)

Women in the security sector

- As of September 2015, the Ministry of National Defence reported that a total of 3,278 women were serving in the army, navy and air force.
- Women are present at all levels of the National Police hierarchy, including a Major General, who served as Assistant Director General, and a Brigadier General, as National Director of Schools. As of September 2015, there were a total of 16,287 women among uniformed and non-uniformed personnel.
- In addition, women actively participate in the operational units of the National Police. As of September 2015, there were 4,065 women, spread across eight areas.

Prevention of violence

Defence Sector

- In terms of previous activities undertaken by the Ministry of Defence, it is important to note that in 2005 an agreement was signed with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to develop the project to "Strengthen sexual and reproductive health for the armed forces and the national police".
- In 2010, Directive No. 11 was issued on zero tolerance for sexual violence, with a view to preventing gender-based violence and violence against women, children and adolescents, particularly acts of sexual violence.
- With technical and logistical support from UNFPA and the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR), the country's policy on sexual and reproductive rights, gender equity and the prevention of gender-based violence, and sexual and reproductive health was published, with an emphasis on HIV/AIDS. In addition, a protocol and operational guide for the prevention of gender-based violence were developed. These were revised

in 2013 and benefited from the input of the Presidential Council for Human Rights (CPDDHH) and the Presidential Council for Women's Equity (CPEM). In 2015, the second version of the protocol was developed and launched in the context of the first anniversary of the National Day for the Dignity of Women Victims of Sexual Violence.

- Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), there are plans to launch a technical working group on security involving the Ministry of National Defence and civil society, in particular the CIASE collective.

18. In addition, relevant information is provided in Annex 3.

Promotion and protection of rights

19. The following developments complement those mentioned under the previous heading:

- The Office of the Attorney-General was restructured following Act No. 1654/2013, which was enacted through eight decree-laws.
- One of the main components of the restructuring was the institutional adoption of a new model of criminal investigation based on establishing and analysing context to generate more effective actions against macro-criminality, including by paying greater attention to the gender perspective and adopting a differentiated approach to the administration of justice and care for victims.
- This model has incorporated criteria for differentiated care as a means to guarantee the right to access to justice for women who are the victims of gender-based crimes. The types of care centres established by the Office of the Attorney-General are: victim care centres (CAV), domestic violence victim support centres (CAVIF), comprehensive care centre for victims of sexual abuse (CAIVAS), assistance centres (SAU), and immediate response units (URI).
- The Office of the Attorney-General established the National Directorate for Public Policy and Planning, and within the Directorate, the Department for Public Policy. Among its other functions, the Department proposes strategies for the cross-cutting implementation of a differentiated approach in internal and public policies, including strategies for mainstreaming a gender perspective and a differentiated approach in the implementation of the functions of the Office of the Attorney-General. To that end, the gender and differentiated approaches team (EGED) was established within the Department.
- The gender team analyses, inter alia, the different forms of gender-based violence suffered by girls, adolescents and women, conducts relevant assessments, and designs proposals for public policies that encourage addressing such forms of violence from a differentiated gender perspective, with a view to strengthening the institutional treatment, investigation and prosecution of such acts.
- In addition, a special group was created in 2014 to address gender-based violence within the National Analysis and Context Department of the Office of the Attorney-General (DINAC), including situations of sexual violence in various parts of the country committed by various armed groups. The first task

of the gender-based violence group was to analyse the 183 accounts contained in the annex to Auto 092/2008, in order to identify strategic measures to guide and promote these cases, as well as patterns in the commission of punishable acts of victimization.

- With regard to the special process for transitional justice envisioned in Act No. 945/2005, priority has been given to the prosecution of sexual violence crimes. New investigation models have helped to convict the perpetrators of such violations, including by the adoption of substantive decisions that guarantee access to justice for women survivors.

- These substantive decisions are in alignment with the action plan for the prioritization of 16 specific perpetrators and focus on four offences: forced displacement, forced recruitment, enforced disappearance and gender-based sexual violence. While this plan has been in operation, charges have been filed in 518 acts of gender-based violence, affecting 579 victims.

- With the participation of officials from the Justice and Peace Unit, the Office of the Attorney-General created 75 awareness-raising opportunities with a view to prioritizing the primary perpetrators, as well as macro-structures and patterns of macro-criminality, including gender-based violence.

- The Office of the Attorney-General released the results of the prioritization of this pattern of macro-criminality, presenting its factual and legal bases, statistics corresponding to facts, the offences charged and victims covered.

- Meetings have been held to raise awareness of the efforts of the Victim Assistance and Comprehensive Reparations Unit (UARIV) and the Office of the Attorney-General concerning victims of sexual violence and the adoption of a differentiated approach to the treatment of victims and the information they provide is kept confidential. In addition, a number of avenues, processes and tools to ensure access to justice and an efficient response to complaints were presented.

- The Office of the Attorney-General has formed 100 technical and legal committees on strategic guidance for the investigation of gender-based sexual violence against women in the context of armed conflict.

- DINAC presented four priority categories in terms of gender-based sexual violence in the context of armed conflict which it has been investigating. These categories are: actions attributable to the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP); events in which the main perpetrator, alias "El Oso" ("The Bear") was excluded from the justice and peace process; acts of recruitment and sexual violence committed by members of the Autodefensas del Frente Cacique Guanentá of the Central Bolivar Block; and the 183 cases referred by the Colombian Constitutional Court in Auto 092/2008, in which 31 sentences have been handed down.

- With the objective of providing comprehensive service to victims and generating the conditions and guarantees necessary for women survivors to be able to formulate their complaints in safety and without risk of repeated victimization, the Office of the Attorney-General has involved other

institutions and has held open days to receive complaints from women and young survivors of sexual violence related to the armed conflict.

- In 2014, the Office of the Attorney-General participated in seven open days to receive testimony and/or complaints from women victims of sexual violence in the context of armed conflict, whose accounts were recorded by personnel properly trained in differentiated and "do no harm" approaches.

- In compliance with the provisions of Act No. 1719, through the National Subdirectorate for Victim and User Support, the Office of the Attorney-General has established a cooperation agreement with the Embassy of Spain in order to strengthen the training of civil servants in service culture with a differentiated gender approach, providing channels of access to justice by elaborating strategies and methodologies for the care of victims, as well as the investigation and the prioritization of cases of gender-based violence.

20. The Ministry of Justice designed and implemented the strategy for access to justice and redress, which seeks to provide guarantees of access to women, with a view to their emotional healing and empowerment as rights holders. One of the strategy's components is psychosocial support, which takes place through collective "circles of support" that accompany judicial investigations into cases of sexual violence, enable effective redress and help to empower victims so that they are aware of the process of rights restoration and of the road maps for handling such cases. This initiative has received the support of various women's organizations that have experience with such processes.

- Within the framework of the inter-agency strategy to fight against impunity and provide comprehensive care to victims of gender-based violence in the context of armed conflict and under the aegis of the CPDDHH, eight interventions have been carried out in six towns and municipalities and in two departments. These include among others, the legal and technical support of the Office of the Attorney-General for cases of gender-based violence related to armed conflict; the identification of barriers and obstacles to access to justice with the participation of women leaders and human rights defenders; and the establishment of agreements with the gender liaisons of territorial entities.

- In the context of the implementation of psychosocial support for child and adolescent victims of armed conflict within families and in communities to generate protective environments and contribute to the security and restoration of their rights, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF) treated 41,495 girls and adolescent victims of violence in the context of armed conflict through protection programmes such as mobile victim support units, the programme of care for children and adolescents separated from armed groups, and administrative measures to restore their rights (PARD).

- In terms of supporting child and adolescent victims of armed conflict with access to and awareness of their rights, the mobile units treated a total of 40,216 girls and adolescent victims of forced displacement. Among the care initiatives undertaken by the units was the distribution of the manual "Déjala Volar" ("Let Her Fly"), an initiative seeking to disseminate the rights of children and adolescents pursuant to the Victims Act.

- The Office of the Ombudsman, pursuant to Act No. 1257 of 2008, provides coaching and advice to female victims seeking to file written or oral complaints, directly or through the Office of the Ombudsman, and it informs them about their rights to legal representation, coordinated by the National Services of the Office of the Ombudsman through the regional services, which will appoint a lawyer on their behalf.

- The Ministry of National Education, within the scope of its ability to ensure access to education for victims, is implementing a project to build the management capacity of the education sector targeted to education secretariats, with a view to ensuring the provision of educational services in situations that affect or could affect the guarantee of the right to education of children, adolescents and youth, as well as victims of armed conflict. In that context, 93 action plans and 372 risk management plans for schools were designed.

- Complementing the training processes for the education sector, a document titled "General guidelines for educational care to vulnerable populations and victims of armed conflict" was published, containing a section with guidance for the provision of educational services to female victims.

- In order to promote educational institutions as safe and protected spaces that encourage peaceful coexistence and mitigate the risk factors to which children, adolescents and youth are exposed, the Ministry of Education extended coverage to 138,110 girls, adolescents and youths who were victims of violence through the educational system using flexible education models. In that regard, directives, guidelines and pedagogical tools have been developed for cross-cutting programmes that have made it possible to provide technical assistance to 94 education secretariats for the implementation of educational projects with a focus on human rights and gender.

- In 2013, the 155 hotline for women victims of violence was launched. This proprietary line of the President of the Republic is operated by the National Police; CPEM monitors and provides technical assistance for its operation.

21. Callers are provided with clear, complete and truthful information on the rights of women victims of violence and are given advice on legal assistance and healthcare. The officials who receive the calls follow an assistance protocol and a script developed by the CPEM in coordination with the relevant support entities. As of October 2015, 247,777 calls had been received.

Addressing relief and recovery needs and priorities

- Act No. 1448/2011 represents a historic step toward guaranteeing the rights of victims and makes them a central priority of State action. The Act establishes a set of individual and collective judicial, administrative, social and economic measures within a framework of transitional justice providing for the creation of institutions exclusively dedicated to guaranteeing the rights of victims: the Land Restitution Unit (URT), the National Centre for Historic Memory (CNMH) and the Victim Assistance and Comprehensive Reparation Unit (UARIV).

- Taking into account that women represent 50 per cent of victims of conflict, the Act provides for significant gains, including the establishment of an administrative programme for comprehensive reparations that is freely

accessible to victims and transfers the burden of proof to the State, as well as measures to ensure that comprehensive reparations are granted to victims of forced displacement, appropriation or forced abandonment of lands, homicide, abduction, torture, enforced disappearance, recruitment of women, children and adolescents, anti-personnel mines and sexual violence in the context of armed conflict.

- On the basis of the rulings of the Constitutional Court and in line with international standards, Act No. 1448/2011 establishes a national system for assistance and comprehensive reparations for victims of armed conflict. As mentioned in the report of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy of the Kennedy School at Harvard University, the Act constitutes the most ambitious and reliable programme in terms of upholding international standards, in addition to covering the largest proportion of offences committed against victims, notably forced displacement, which accounts for more than 86 per cent of the victims recorded in the Central Register of Victims (RUV).

- The Act recognizes the entitlement to collective reparations to groups, organizations and communities, including women's organizations, that have suffered collective harm. As part of this process, efforts were undertaken to incorporate a gender perspective in the comprehensive reparation measures relating to collective reparations; in this context, many groups identified sexual violence as a form of harm suffered.

- Through the UARIV, the strategy to provide comprehensive reparations to women victims of sexual violence was designed and implemented to provide differentiated, comprehensive and appropriate support to victims. The aim of the strategy is to create spaces for developing, discussing and improving women's futures, with an emphasis on rights, in the context of the comprehensive reparations process.

- In 2014, the strategy was conducted in several municipalities in the country, with the participation of 180 women victims of sexual violence.

- This approach to addressing the issue of collective reparations through engagement with women's organizations has the potential to develop into a good practice that could be replicated in other conflict situations, as recognized by the United Nations during the UARIV Director's visit to New York in 2014.

- As a result of the inclusion of women as beneficiaries of individual reparation schemes, in 2014, 2,081 compensation payments were made and 1,287 comprehensive individual reparation plans were developed for victims of sexual violence. In addition, 257 victims of sexual violence participated in the emotional recovery strategy, which allows victims to discuss and obtain relief from their suffering.

Law enforcement entities and training and awareness-raising initiatives

- The National Police has developed ongoing training initiatives on topics related to gender-based violence and violence against women through the National Directorate of Schools. From 2013 to 2015, 34,802 officials were trained through various modalities.

- In addition, in 2015, around 103 missions were conducted abroad[5] by female staff at all levels of the National Police force to provide technical guidance to different countries, as well as teaching support, assistance and enhanced education on various topics of interest to the institution.
- The Ministry of Defence has undertaken a number of efforts to increase awareness and train members of the law enforcement establishment on topics relating to gender, women and sexual violence, particularly in situations of armed conflict, initiatives that it has been strengthening since 2013. (See Annex 4.)
- With regard to teaching initiatives, the Ministry of Defence organizes, on an annual basis, topical extracurricular training sessions that focus on, inter alia, the prevention of sexual violence. (See Annex 5.)

Recommendations for protecting human rights defenders

- One of the underlying pillars of the national human rights policy is the promotion and preservation of new leadership, with the understanding that a basic principle of prevention and protection consists in recognizing human rights defenders as legitimate interlocutors and, therefore, as participants in public decisions affecting them.
- Accordingly, efforts have been undertaken to strengthen the national mechanism to safeguard the work of human rights defenders and social and community leaders, a forum for high-level tripartite political dialogue that has developed initiatives to enhance prevention, protection and investigation. (See Annex 6.)
- Based on the criteria of the Constitutional Court for the development of a comprehensive public policy to promote the defence of human rights in the context of internal armed conflict, with a focus on gender, the following initiatives are being developed by the Ministry of the Interior:
- A programme to safeguard the work of women human rights leaders and defenders, which addresses the issue of protection from a holistic perspective covering academic, political, legal and material aspects, developed on the basis of joint proposals and the concept that women human rights defenders come from all walks of life.

22. As of February 2013, the forum for dialogue on the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the prevention and protection policy for the rights of women human rights defenders was formally established, based on methods previously agreed upon with women's organizations. This initiative resulted in the issuance of the public policy document of the comprehensive programme to safeguard the rights of women human rights leaders and defenders and its related action plan, in which a number of women's organizations have participated.[6]

[5] A total of 40 and 63 missions have been conducted in Europe and Central and South America, respectively.

[6] Asociación nacional de afrocolombianos desplazados (Afrodes); Asociación nacional de mujeres campesinas, indígenas y negras de Colombia (Anmucic); Asociación de usuarios del río desbaratado (Asodes); Casa de la Mujer; Mujeres al derecho (Colemad); Bureau Sisma Opiac; Rural Women; Women, among others.

23. The programme was formally launched in 2015. It is based on a comprehensive approach to protection that includes aspects relating to early and emergency prevention and guarantees of non-repetition.

24. Concurrently, a draft decree establishing the cross-sectoral commission to safeguard the rights of women human rights leaders and defenders and regulating aspects of the comprehensive programme to safeguard their rights was formulated. Its main function is to oversee coordination among institutions for the effective implementation of the programme. The decree is currently under review.

25. With regard to the programme's policy document, final adjustments to the action plan are being made, to be followed by the launch of the coordination process for the inclusion of a chapter with an ethnic focus, taking into account the efforts, progress and competencies of the Ministry of the Interior and its subsequent phase of development, design and preparation for 2016.

- Joint development of a safeguards programme for women. This initiative, developed in 2012, goes beyond strictly material concepts of protection and is based on analysis of the issue of displaced women leaders and human rights defenders, the guiding principles of the policy for the defence of human rights and basic concepts relating to the categories of displaced women leaders and women human rights defenders, with a differentiated focus on rights and gender, as well as on prevention, protection and guarantees of non-repetition.

26. Various national and international entities have supported the programme's development.[7] In 2014, the Ministry of the Interior led the process of producing the final version of the document developed by the programme, on the basis of dialogue, exchange and the collective development of proposals by the Government, civil society and the Office of the Ombudsman, with a view to reversing the violence faced by women in their daily work of defending human rights.

27. The precedent for the comprehensive safeguards programme for women was Decision No. 0805/2012,[8] the first ministerial decision to recognize the special needs of particular populations — in this case, women — in the areas of prevention and protection. This decision is the result of a lengthy process conducted by women's civil society organizations, under the auspices and in consultation with the national Government.

- In addition, with the aim of improving their visibility, strengthening, educating and enhancing prevention, protection and support efforts for women victims of armed conflict, the Ministry of the Interior provided technical and financial support for 22 projects in 24 departments from 2013 to 2014, amounting to approximately US $374,914.

[7] The Office of the Ombudsman, the Presidential Programme for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, the CPEM, women's social movement organizations, with the support of the Mission to Support the Peace Process (MAPP)/Organization of American States (OAS), OHCHR and the Ministry of the Interior.

[8] The decision formalizes the specific protection protocol with a focus on gender and the rights of women. It establishes differential measures and stipulates that, in cases of sexual violence, requests for protection should be handled by the entity specifically dedicated to addressing requests for protection submitted by women, the Committee on Risk Assessment and Recommendation of Measures (CERREM); it also provides for the inclusion, in the context of risk evaluation, of a review of specific factors inherent to the situation of women who have suffered sexual violence.

- The main objective of Decree No. 2065/2011, which established the National Protection Unit (UNP), is to strengthen the organization, coordination and delivery of protection services for those persons who, as a result of their activities and conditions or by virtue of holding a public office, find themselves in a situation of extraordinary or extreme risk of suffering harm to their lives, integrity, liberty or personal security. It is the product of joint efforts between the national Government and civil society to address the consequences of violence against specific population groups.

- Directive No. 02 of 2014, which provides general guidelines for the incorporation of a differentiated gender focus in the various sub-entities of the Unit, led to the creation of the UNP Committee on Gender Mainstreaming and a group of facilitators composed of staff members and partners in charge of transforming cultural attitudes toward UNP staff and those serving the Unit, through the launch of an awareness-raising initiative and the application of a gender focus at all levels of action of the UNP.

- In 2015, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a working group on the topic of interviewing victims of sexual violence was held in order to make staff members, particularly risk level analysts, aware of the assistance needs of women victims of sexual violence As a working tool, a flyer on assistance for women victims of sexual violence was developed.

- As of 2015, as provided by the General Directorate of the Unit, one person within the advisory team is exclusively responsible for addressing matters related to gender to ensure that they are addressed in a cross-cutting manner across all populations. The adviser is also a co-leader of the UNP Committee on Gender Mainstreaming. In addition, the UNP organized six days of training on the gender dimension for 60 staff members and contractors.

- Further to the information contained in footnote 8, during the period 2013-2015, 14 meetings of the Committee on Risk Assessment and Recommendation of Measures (CERREM)-Women were held. However, it should be noted that not all the cases of women leaders and human rights defenders are presented in CERREM-Women, as during their interviews many women declined to share their stories in that space; accordingly their cases are presented in CERREM-Populations under the category described in Article 2.4.1.2.6, paragraph 2 of Decree No. 1066/2015.

- Starting in 2015 and with the objective of having an accounting of costs for each of the CERREM bodies, figures were established regarding the measures approved or ratified in each of these Committees (Annex 7). In addition, the proportion of women evaluated in the various population categories, including women leaders and human rights defenders, is also provided.

- One of the physical protection measures envisioned in Decree No. 1066/2015 is the use of bullet-proof vests. Because of how these vests are designed, it was necessary to have them altered for use by women on account of their different physical characteristics. From 2013-2015, the National Protection Unit (UNP) distributed 1,653 women's bullet-proof vests.

Recommendation on Judgment C-355/06

28. With a view to implementing Judgment C-355/06, the Ministry of Health has taken the following measures:

- Signature of an agreement to produce and disseminate a baseline on knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) constituting barriers to access to comprehensive services for the voluntary termination of pregnancy (VTOP) in the general population, and to health-care providers (IPS) that deliver sexual and reproductive health services.

29. The results of that agreement included:

- Design and implementation of an educational and social mobilization campaign using both traditional and alternative mass media platforms to promote the health and sexual and reproductive rights of women and men, including the right to VTOP, as well as the duty of health-care providers to effectively ensure the quality and timely delivery of these services.
- Training for communicators, journalists and leaders of the social mobilization component of 32 departments and the capital district, on the conceptual aspects, ethics and existing regulatory framework that govern the promotion of health, sexual and reproductive rights and gender equity in the context of the General Social Security System for Health (SGSSS), with an emphasis on the rights of women to VTOP services, pursuant to Constitutional Court Judgment C-355/06.
- Signature of an agreement with the National University of Colombia, with the aim of producing:
- Discussion forums with different actors and the affected sectors on the ethical, legal and medical dimensions of human rights, gender and equity, in the broader policy context that governs the management of sexual and reproductive health within the SGSSS. A total of 34 academic forums were conducted, including a national forum and a departmental forum in each of the 32 departments and in the capital district of Bogotá, in which a total of 2,824 persons participated.[9]
- Document entitled "*Implicaciones eticas, juridicas y medicas de la Sentencia C-355 de la Corte Constitucional: Un avance para el ejercicio de los derechos humanos, sexuales y reproductivos de las colombianas*" ("The Ethical, Legal and Medical Implications of Constitutional Court Judgment C-355: A Step forward for the Realization of the Human, Sexual and Reproductive Rights of Colombian Women).[10]
- Training for health teams and sexual and reproductive health services managers in the 32 departments and the capital district on the existing conceptual, ethical and normative framework, with an emphasis on the rights of women to VTOP services, in accordance with Judgment C-355/06.

[9] Report available at: http://www.unal.edu.co/bioetica/documentos/NUEVAWEB/INFORME_FINAL_MPS_UNAL.doc.

[10] Available at: http://www.unal.edu.co/bioetica/documentos/conveniodoc/parte%20interna%20cartilla.pdf.

- Elaboration of a proposal for intersectoral coordination to strengthen women's access to the guarantees covered by Judgment C-355/06, within the health, justice, education and protection sectors and the Public Legal Service. Such coordination has been implemented in five cities throughout the country, using nine cross-cutting intervention strategies that were designed, approved and publicized to ensure the availability of VTOP services in each of the cities where the strategies are being implemented, and to identify and document cross-cutting barriers to access.

Awareness-raising and training

- Training in the implementation of the protocol for the prevention of unsafe abortion and the updating, operational and technical validation and dissemination of technical documents: for abortion and post-abortion care, including any potential complications; for advice and support pre- and post-VTOP; and for comprehensive VTOP care at a low level of complexity, prioritizing health-promoting companies and territorial health-care providers.

30. Moreover, an awareness-raising process was conducted with regard to the prevention of unsafe abortion and voluntary termination of pregnancy. In five cities throughout the country in 2013, days to raise awareness about the prevention of unsafe abortion and the voluntary termination of pregnancy were observed, with the participation of 415 individuals from various institutions of the health, security and education sectors.

- Through the Colombian Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (FECOLSOG), and using the biological training model, a theoretical and practical training course in VTOP took place in 23 cities in 2014, with the participation of 88 medical professionals, 71 of whom were obstetricians-gynaecologists. This course prioritized gynaecologists, obstetricians and general practitioners in the 20 most vulnerable subregions identified as having high levels of maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality.

- Design and implementation of a diploma in sexual and reproductive health and human rights, with an emphasis on the prevention of unsafe abortion and the implementation of technical and policy frameworks for VTOP. Of the 86 professionals who were certified, 36 per cent completed training in manual vacuum aspiration and contraception.

- Between 2011 and 2014, 391 medical professionals were trained in manual vacuum aspiration by the Ministry directly at the national level.

- Provision of technical assistance to the local health directorates (DTS), both in person and virtually, the last two sessions being carried out in 2015.[11]

Design and dissemination of technical guidelines, instruments and tools

31. The tools listed in Annex 8 have been disseminated in national meetings from 2012 to 2015 and delivered electronically to different actors; they are also available in the digital repository of information on the website of the Ministry of Health.

[11] The link is: https://sas.elluminate.com/site/external/jwsdetect/nativeplayback.jnlp?sid=1110&psid=2015-09-25.0602.M.68BE7CCE6EABFCFA345707424D3080.vcr.

Actions focused on children and youth

- In compliance with Judgment C-355/06 and through the Directorate for Protection,[12] legal and technical guidelines have been shared with the regional directors of the Colombian Family Welfare Institute, family advocates and coordinators of the different legal groups with a view to addressing the issue of consent to VTOP for girls and adolescents.
- These guidelines stipulate that when girls or adolescents in one of the situations presented in Judgment C-355/06 decide to interrupt their pregnancy, government personnel must be capable of providing the preventive or special protection needed in each case and of rapidly heeding the demand of health authorities to provide measures for support, protection and/or the restoration of rights, as well as ensuring psychotherapeutic support both before and after medical procedures and the social support required by adolescent girls and their families. (Circular 09/2006 and Circular 68/2008).
- The respective guidelines to be followed by family advocates to address the various issues were thus developed.

Recommendation to ensure the provision of health-care services for women having undergone an abortion

32. The Ministry of Health has been carrying out a series of actions to ensure the provision of health-care services to women who have undergone an unsafe abortion, including:

- The design and approval of a tool for post-abortion care (abortion, spontaneous abortion and abortion complications), which is available on the website of the Ministry of Health. This tool has been implemented in four departments and in Bogotá; it has been widely disseminated through forums, technical assistance and training.
- Technical support starting in 2014 to manage the reduction of maternal morbidity and mortality through the implementation of tools designed to evaluate its management, including the prevention of unsafe abortion. Nine departments and 50 municipalities are covered.
- Management follow-up for public and private health-care institutions in 50 municipalities and 10 selected companies promoting health, taking into account the volume of maternal deaths.
- Building of a database with the input of specialists in obstetrics and gynaecology who are trained in VTOP and related procedures in more than 80 per cent of the territorial entities.
- Compilation of documents and technical guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health in the area of sexual and reproductive health. (See Annex 9.)

[12] The Directorate for Protection of the Colombian Family Welfare Institute is responsible for evaluating, training and monitoring the regional ICBF branches and agents of the National Family Welfare System with regard to the implementation of policies, plans, guidelines and standards for the comprehensive protection of children, as well as the harmonization of legal criteria where there are differences in interpretation between different units.

Recommendation on the policy for the prevention of pregnancies

- CONPES Social document No. 147, which establishes guidelines for developing a strategy to prevent teenage pregnancy and promote healthy lifestyle choices for boys, girls, adolescents and youth between 6 and 19 years of age, was signed in 2012. The cross-sectoral initiatives developed within the CONPES framework are cited in Annex 10.
- The youth-friendly health services model was implemented and strengthened. In this context, technical assistance was provided to more than 20 local health directorates, administrative and care personnel received training in the model and in sexual and reproductive health and rights, and contraceptive methods, pre- and post-HIV-test counselling, pregnancy tests and pre-conception care, among other services, were also provided.
- From 2010 to 2014, a total of 4024 youth-friendly health services were implemented at the national level.
- In the context of the programme for specialized care for pregnant or nursing adolescents and women older than 18 years of age whose rights or those of their children have been neglected, threatened or violated and who have decided to continue their pregnancies, the ICBF has developed a series of initiatives. (See Annex 11.)

Comprehensive strategy for the prevention of teenage pregnancy

- Taking into account the CONPES evaluation of document No. 147 and the related recommendations provided by the National Planning Department, the ICBF, in conjunction with the Ministry of Health, took a lead role in implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy (2015-2024) "Change the World by Exercising Your Rights," which promotes a rights-based approach and recognizes boys, girls and adolescents as "subjects" and "subjects of law."
- The Strategy seeks to promote the alignment of public policy gains relating to children and adolescents with the mandate provided in the National Development Plan (2014-2018) "United for a New Country," particularly the provisions of articles 82, 83 and 84, as well as the lessons learned and the recommendations from the CONPES document No. 147 evaluation.
- The Strategy emphasizes the need to recognize teenage pregnancy as a development indicator, owing to its impact on the life course of the persons concerned and for their families and communities, and as a factor that, inter alia, perpetuates poverty cycles and limits the development of capacities and opportunities for inclusion. Based on a holistic understanding of rights, it calls on the State to strengthen its efforts to provide timely and comprehensive responses, developed in collaboration with the subjects concerned.

Information, education and communication strategy in the area of sexual and reproductive health

- The implementation of strategies aimed at youth and adolescents has led to the strengthening of national capacities, including through the provision of technical assistance to each department.

33. "Por mí, yo decido" (Deciding for Myself): In 2013, a mass communication strategy for the prevention of teenage pregnancy was designed and disseminated. The campaign consists of communication materials developed for TV and radio, as well as initiatives to launch and broadcast the materials on nationwide youth programmes with a wide audience and web pages: www.pormiyodecido.com.

34. An "edu-tainment" strategy to promote social change, "Revelados 1 y 2 desde todas las posiciones" (Exploring all Positions): This strategy was designed and disseminated in order to promote critical thinking and transform individual, family, sociocultural and political practices, with a view to ensuring that youth and adolescents are able to effectively exercise their sexual and reproductive rights.

- Other efforts were also undertaken, including formal education initiatives for health professionals aimed at providing virtual degrees for health professionals in the area of adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights and in assistance for pregnant women under the age of 15. (2013-2014)

Youth mobilization and participation

- National Youth Council for the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy: Within the framework of the Andean Plan for the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy, national and regional councils were established to promote, develop and recognize the participation and mobilization of youth in support of their human, sexual and reproductive rights. The 2014-2016 national council is made up of 22 youth leaders from 14 departments representing the five regional councils, which are composed of 81 regional representatives, for a total of 102 national representatives, who effect political change in their regions and participate in the cross-sectoral round tables mentioned in CONPES document No. 147.

- Generation More: Youth initiatives: Since 2013, the Ministry of Health has been implementing the "youth initiatives project," aimed at promoting the sexual and reproductive rights and supporting the development of healthy lifestyle choices for boys, girls, adolescents and youth living in the municipalities[13] with the highest rates of teenage pregnancy, by providing material resources in support of initiatives related to, inter alia, the arts, culture, sports, communications, the environment, civic participation, volunteer networks and community-focused projects.

Recommendation on sterilization

35. Under this recommendation, progress has been made in the following areas:

- The Ten Year Public Health Plan for the period 2012-2021, adopted through Ministry of Health resolution 1841 of 2013, defined sexuality and sexual and reproductive rights, outlining objectives, strategies and targets for a positive impact on the social determinants affecting the sexual and reproductive health of the Colombian population, through the components of advocacy for sexual

[13] The youth initiatives implemented cover 192 municipalities and 620 youth organizations, groups or networks. The initiatives were divided into three categories according to the stage of life of the youth and adolescents concerned, with content and topics adapted to their age and experience level.

and reproductive rights and gender equality, and for comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care and prevention from a rights-based approach.

- On the basis of a comprehensive approach to women before, during and after childbirth, inspection, monitoring and control were strengthened in order to ensure compliance with the activities required to respond to demand for comprehensive care and access to counselling, contraception advice and delivery of contraceptive methods. Barriers to access and use of modern methods of contraception were also removed, in accordance with the attributes and needs of the population of childbearing age, including adolescents.
- Among the targets for increasing the prevalence of the use of modern contraceptive methods, by 2021 the use of modern methods of contraception by women of childbearing age (15-49 years) and by all sexually active adolescents aged 15 to 19 will increase to 80 per cent.
- Similarly, the provision of modern contraceptive methods was expanded in the mandatory health plan, in addition to including condoms.

Recommendation on consent to sterilization

- In Colombia in recent years, significant progress has been made regarding approaches to disability, including public policy actions from institutions, the private sector, civil society representation in organizations of and for persons with disabilities, as well as social media, academia and international cooperation agencies.
- Current case law establishes that sterilization can be carried out at the request of the parents or legal representative of the person with a disability, with prior legal authorization and having determined (with some degree of certainty) that the person concerned will in the future lack the capacity to give consent and to express the intention to create a family. However, while the Court has raised important underlying concerns regarding individual autonomy, informed consent, consent by proxy, the right to have a family and to decide on the number of children, it has also specified that a woman with cognitive disabilities does not necessarily have the capacity to make such decisions merely because she has legal representation. The Court has gradually established a number of conditions to allow a judge to make a determination on capacity on the merits.

36. There have been moves in national and international legislation towards implementing a new paradigm on disability, which includes the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities. In that regard, Act No. 1618/2013 and CONPES Document No. 166 of 2013 establish policy on disability and social inclusion.

- The guidelines of the Ministry of Health are aimed at promoting and guaranteeing sexual and reproductive rights and identifying and giving health care priority to persons with greater social vulnerability (including women with disabilities, victims, adolescent and young women, the rural population, indigenous people, and people of African descent).
- A woman's right to decide for herself on her reproduction will always prevail in any circumstances, and choosing a modern temporary or permanent method

of contraception shall be accompanied by advice from a health professional, who will take a rights-based approach based on the medical criteria for contraceptive eligibility.

- Under the regulatory framework on women's autonomy in deciding to undergo sterilization, women living with HIV are in the same position as women without the virus.

- At present, the quality of antiretroviral treatments means that the chances that a pregnant woman living with HIV who receives high quality treatment in a timely manner will transmit HIV to her child are almost zero. Comprehensive care for women living with HIV includes pre-gestational advice, which explains the chances of transmitting HIV from mother to child; it is for the woman to decide whether or not to become pregnant.

- The public policy on rights, sexuality and sexual and reproductive rights, which was formulated from a gender and differentiated rights-based approach, aims to guarantee and respect the autonomy of women living with HIV and women and girls with disabilities, and it prioritizes their consent above that of health professionals when carrying out sterilization procedures, since applying economic and property-related civil standards constitutes a clear violation of personal rights, including sexual and reproductive rights.

- In its fifth priority dimension, the Ten Year Public Health Plan outlines the expansion of the network of adolescent and youth-friendly services. Those actions are complemented by the cross-cutting dimension of management tailored to vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities. Particular attention is given to reinforcement of the skills of personnel in all fields of health care in meeting special needs and to developing and organizing the health care services offered and methods of delivering care.

- Profamilia, in association with the Academy, Asdown and Fundamental Colombia, is conducting training of health professionals and community agents to promote the sexual and reproductive rights of persons with disabilities.

- Act No. 1618/2013 has established that the Ministry of Justice, in partnership with the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Family Commissions and the ICBF, should propose and implement reforms and make adjustments to the judicial interdiction system in order to develop a system that supports the exercise of legal capacity and the supported decision-making of persons with disabilities, in accordance with article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

37. The following activities have been conducted with the participation of representatives from organizations of persons with disabilities:

38. **Implementation of adjustments and reforms to the judicial interdiction system**: A working group was formed to address the topic, starting with the collection and analysis of case law on the exercise of the rights of persons with disabilities, especially their legal capacity, which provided valuable inputs to the process.[14] The Ministry of Justice is seeking a broader approach to legal and social recognition and a cultural shift to permit the full enjoyment of rights by persons

[14] At the outset, these included the Ministry of Justice, the Attorney-General's Office and the Colombian Family Welfare Institute.

with disabilities; using such an approach, it seeks to recognize their capacity not only with regard to economic rights, but also to decision-making in all areas. This approach strives to prioritize the autonomy of persons with disabilities, including by addressing the issue of informed consent, which is a cross-cutting matter for all institutional structures making interventions, in particular those targeting persons with disabilities.

39. **Disability training programme for justice officials**: Training for justice officials on the full recognition of persons with disabilities with regard to the provision of justice.

40. **Protocol for access to justice for persons with disabilities**: Elaboration of the protocol for access to justice for persons with disabilities.

41. **Participation in the Working Group of the Committee for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities**. During a meeting of the Committee in April 2012, a proposal was made to develop an instruction manual on supports and safeguards for the exercise of legal capacity by persons with disabilities, which would serve as a reference for states Members of the Organization of American States (OAS) in its efforts to replace the concept of interdiction by that of supports and safeguards.

42. **Strengthening of organizations of persons with disabilities**: The Ministry of Justice recently launched the electronic platform Legalapp, a website that allows citizens free access to information regarding what to do, when to do it and who to contact, should the legal need arise. This tool raises awareness about access to justice and will have a special component on disability, to be developed in collaboration with the members of the sectoral liaison group.

Actions undertaken within the framework of the National Council on Disability.

- Pursuant to Act No. 1145/2007, the National Disability System was established, with the primary objective of encouraging the elaboration and implementation of public policy on disability, coordination among entities at the national, regional and local levels and the actions of organizations of persons with disabilities and civil society, in order to promote and guarantee their fundamental rights.
- The National Disability System is divided into four levels, including the National Council on Disability, which is the body responsible for consultation, institutional assessment and verification, monitoring and evaluation of the national public policy on disability.

43. The issue of the legal capacity of persons with disabilities has been consistently monitored and prioritized by the Council and is consequently reflected in its workplan, which envisions a number of meetings to address the subject and present the main achievements and challenges.